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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

SOCIETY

FOR THE

Propagation of the Gospel

IN
FOREIGN PARTS,

At the Parish Church of

St. Mary-le-Bow,

On ~~Friday~~ the 16th of February, 1710.

Being the Day of their Anniversary Meeting.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM Lord Bishop of St. ASAPH.

K. Fleetwood
L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by Joseph Downing in Bartholomew-Close
near West-Smithfield, 1711.

Preached before the

At a General Meeting of The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,
Friday February 16. 1791.

AGREED, That the Thanks of this Society be given to the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph, for his Excellent Sermon preach'd this Day in the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow: And that his Lordship be desired to Print the same.

St. Mary-le-Bow,

John Chamberlayne, Secretary.

Being the Day of their Anniversary Meeting.

By the Right Reverend Bishop of St. Asaph

WILLIAM Lord Bishop of St. Asaph

L O N D O N

Printed and Sold by Joseph Downing in Southwark-Street
near West-Smithfield, 1791.

Acts XXVI. v. 18.

*To open their Eyes, and to turn them from
Darkness to Light, and from the Pow-
er of Satan unto God; that they may
receive forgiveness of Sins, and an
Inheritance among them which are
sanctified by Faith that is in me.*

ST. Paul is in this Chapter, giving an Ac-
count of his Conversion, to King Agrip-
pa, Festus, and a numerous Audience of
Attendants, Jews and Romans; and amongst o-
ther things he tells them, that Jesus Christ, who
appeared to him, told him he would deliver
him from the People, i. e. the Jews, and from the
Gentiles, to whom he was now sending him.
The Errand he now sent him on, was this,
expressed in the Words of the Text; to open, &c.
In which Words we have, First, a Descrip-
tion of the State the Gentile World was then in;
their Eyes were shut, they lived in Darkness, and
under the Power of Satan. Secondly, The change
that Christianity was to make in them; it was to
open their Eyes, to turn them from Darkness to Light,

and from the Power of Satan unto God. Thirdly, The end of this Conversion, that by Faith in Christ they might receive forgiveness of their Sins here, and an Inheritance hereafter in Heaven among the Saints, or them which are Sanctified.

First, Here is a Description of the State and Condition the Gentile World was then in, expressed by Blindness and Darkness, as the most comfortless, so the most hazardous Estate of Life; and by being under the Power and Dominion of Satan, the declared Enemy of God and Man; the great Usurper of God's Honour, and a great Tyrant over all his Vassals. These Expressions are all of them Figurative, and put to shew how deplorably sunk the World was, in Worship and in Practice; plung'd into all Idolatry, and into all sort of Wickedness, into which they fell, being blinded in their Understanding. Their Idols (saith the Psalmist, 135.) are Silver and Gold, the Work of Mens Hands; they have Eyes, and see not; Ears, and hear not; Noses have they, and smell not: They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their Trust in them. The Man who discerns not the Vanity of Idols, is as blind, with respect to Reason, which is the Eye of the Soul, as the Idol it self is, which seeth not, tho' it look as if it could. And as for Sin, it is every where represented as a State of Blindness, and all

all its Works are accounted Works of Darkness, as well because Men cannot fall into them, before they have extinguish'd the Light that God hath placed in them to guide and direct their Steps; as also because they are generally ashamed of them, and seek Concealment and Obscurity; and because they lead to Misery and Punishment, which the Scriptures call a place of outer Darkness.

The Power of Satan implies, 1. The Idolatry in which the World was then, and long before held; all Worship besides that of the true God, terminating in Him, who is therefore call'd the God of this World. 2. The Power and Possession he had in, and over Mens Bodies, to afflict and torment them with Diseases and strange Sufferings; which God for some secret Purposes, but especially for the greater Manifestation of the Power and Glory of His Son Jesus Christ, permitted those bad Spirits to exercise in greater Degree and Measure, about, and at the time of Christ's appearing in the Flesh, and for about Two Hundred Years after, than ever He did before or since. And 3. it implies (and that most commonly in Scripture) the Power and Dominion of Sin; Satan being in some sort the proper Author of Sin, the first Sinner himself, and the first Seducer of his Fellow-Angels; the

first tempter of Mankind to Sin, the great encourager of it ever since, and the designed Executioner of God's Vengeance on it in the World of Misery to come. For these Reasons, all Sin is in a manner referr'd to Him, as to its first Principle; and all Sinners are call'd *his Children*, *his Subjects*, and *his Servants*: Not that he is indeed a Father, a Prince, and Master of the World, (as some too easily conclude from these and such Expressions) but because they *do his Works*, they follow *his Example*, and imitate this apostate Spirit, in his Wickedness and Disobedience; and are therefore said to be *under his Power and Dominion* as well when they follow the wicked Devices of their own Hearts, as when they are actually led by *his Suggestions*, and truly tempted by him.

From this Ignorance of the true God, from this Blindness of their Understanding, from these Works of Darkness, and from this Power of Satan; the Apostles, as the Ministers of Christ, were to deliver the *Gentile-World*: Which was the Second thing I was to speak to; for so saith Christ himself: *I send thee to open their Eyes, to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, i. e. Christianity was to overthrow Idolatry, root out the Worship of many Gods, and to reform the wicked World in all Instances: It

was

was first to introduce the Worship of one, and the true God into the World, and then to conform the Reason and Manners of it, to his Will, to engage Men to live with one another, like Children of the same common Father, and Subjects of the same Prince, and Servants of the same Master. These were the two great things that Christianity was to do, to convince the World that there was but one God, and that the way to please Him, was to live well with one another, to do Justice, show Mercy, live Virtuously, and discharge Honestly the Duties of our natural, and our civil Relation.

Our Saviour preaching to, and living with the Jews, who were now free from all Idolatry, does not often take notice of this great End of his coming, to let them know there was but one God: But the Apostles, who were to go into the Gentile-World, are full of this Doctrine, and always insist upon this Article. They must indeed, as they did evermore begin with it, for Christianity supposes it, and without that Bottom cannot stand. Reveal'd Religion pretends to be the Will of God declared to Mankind, but if there be more Gods than One, then there may be more Revelations, and contrary to this that is now brought: And a Man may be as much obliged to receive them, as this,
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and that in the end comes to nothing; for contrary Obligations, if equal, void each other, and leave Men at their Liberty. One may see, by all the Writings of the *Apostles*, and by all the *Apologies* of Old, in Behalf of Christians, and their Faith, that nothing was to be done with the *Gentiles*, till they believed there was but *One God*. This also made good Way for the Reception of that pure Morality, that Christ commanded to be taught: for, as the idolatrous Worship of the *Gentiles* was generally accompanied with Rites, either *cruel* or *obscene*; so the returning to the Worship of the true God, abolish'd naturally those bad Customs. And as Men think they ought to endeavour to resemble, as well as they can, the God they worship; so by having God represented to them, just and true, holy, merciful, and good, they would naturally conform their Manners to those Notions. Which is one Reason why the *Christian* Morality exceeds all others; because the *Christian* Revelation discovers a more excellent and perfect supream Being, than any other Institution or Religion.

These Discoveries of the true God, who is so holy, just, and pure a Being, and of the way of worshiping Him acceptably, by addressing to Him in, and through the Mediation of his

Blessed

Blessed Son, together with the absolute Necessity of leaving all our Sins, and of endeavouring to be holy, just, and true, and merciful our selves, as he enables us to be. --- These Things, I say, are implied in *Opening the Eyes of the Gentiles, and turning them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.*

To live in Ignorance and Error is no uneasy State, because no Condition of the Mind is any farther Evil than it is apprehended so; and whilst Men are ignorant of the Truth, they feel no real want of it; nor can they well desire it, whilst they do not know they have it not. But to live under the Power of Satan, i.e. under the Dominion of Sin, is really grievous and uneasy, a Thing that reasonable Men do truly suffer under, and complain of. They find themselves vex'd and disquieted with their own Passions, and are neither at Rest under the Importunity of many of their Desires, nor yet with their Indulgence and Satisfaction: They feel a Sort of War within themselves, betwixt their Appetites, which are tumultuous and disorderly, and their Reason, which would fain restrain them; And altho' they know not naturally how to deny themselves, yet they are secretly convinced they should and ought, are pleas'd when they can and do, and griev'd and asham'd of their Weakness when they yield.

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Thus far the Reason and natural Conscience of some Men have carried them, without the Aid of Revelation: And therefore wise and reasonable Men would be glad to be deliver'd from this Bondage they are under, to their own corrupt Affections, considering them as *troublesome*, tho' not *sinful*, and to be redeemed to such a noble Liberty, as Reason tells them they might and should enjoy. But when, moreover, they consider, that their disorderly Affections do not only shew them to be *weak* and *imperfect* Creatures, but by yielding to them, make them *false*, *unjust*, *cruel*, *impure*, and *mischievous*, and consequently odious in the Sight of God, and obnoxious to his Anger, and what Vengeance may be justly due to those Offences -- When they consider this, they find their Sins not only *burthen-some*, but *hazardous*, and such as give them *Fear* as well as *Trouble*.

From this Fear and from this Hazard, Christ's Religion only can deliver Men; that is, the End of their Conversion, *that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins*, which is the *Third Thing* to be spoken to.

By *Forgiveness of Sins*, is properly meant the Remission of that Punishment that is due to Sin; for, if Sin were not punishable, it were not to be forgiven: And look what Apprehension People have

have of their Danger; just so they value their Deliverance, and Escape: And therefore forgiveness of Sins, is a Matter of infinitely greater Consequence with *Christians*, than it could be with the *Gentiles*, or seems to have been with the common *Jews*; because the *Christian Revelation* opens a much sadder Scene of Misery to wicked and impenitent People, than common Reason could discover to the *Gentile*, or the *Law and Prophets* did to the *Jews*, at least with any clearness: *The Wrath of God is now Reveal'd against all Unrighteousness*, and the Effect of it, is endless Punishment, in Pains most exquisite: Deliverance from which, is now included in the *Forgiveness of Sins*: And so *St. Paul* saith, *1 Thes. 1. 10.* That *Jesus delivereth us from the Wrath to come.* And *Heb. 2. 14.* From him who hath the Power of Death, i. e. the Devil. There is no way of discovering the Mercy and Goodness of God, in sending His Son to die for the forgiveness of Sins, like shewing the astonishing Danger to which those Sins had certainly expos'd us; and whoever will truly understand, in order truly to value *Christ's Redemption*, must first consider the Captivity in which He lay, the Chains He was laden with, the Darkness in which He sat, and the Punishment to which He was reserved. Consider what that Saviour and Redeemer

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deemer saith himself, Matth. 25. 41. Depart from Me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: And ver. 46. These shall go away into Everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal. Consider what St. Paul says, 2 Thes. 1. 7. When the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction. Let us find as many Figures as we will, in these and such like Passages, the Truth must needs be, that the Punishment assign'd to wicked and impenitent People, in the other World, will certainly be great and endless; which shews us also what the Mercy is, of having our Sins forgiven; and what a mighty Saviour and Deliverer Christ was, who was, as the Angel said, to save us from our Sins.

But the Goodness of God is like Himself, Infinite. He does not only save us from our Sins, but crowneth us with Mercy and loving Kindness. The Design of sending Christ into the World to live and die for us, was not only that we might thereby receive the forgiveness of Sins, but also an Inheritance among the Saints, or them which are Sanctified: Whom He will Justify, them He will also Glorify. It is with Men, we see, one thing

thing to Pardon, and another to Reward; but with God it is the same; they whose Sins shall be forgiven, shall also be Inheritors of everlasting Happiness. The Reason of that is, that the Purpose of God was, that Man continuing Innocent and in Obedience, was to be for ever Happy, and nothing but Sin could possibly defeat this gracious Purpose, and put him under God's Displeasure; but Sin intervening did it; the Mischief therefore had been endless and irreparable, had not God in his boundless Mercy, sent His Son to die for the Forgiveness of our Sins: So saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *For he hath made Him to be Sin for us, (i. e. He dealt with Him, as if He had been a Sinner) who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him.* The only thing therefore that cast Man out of God's Favour, being thus removed and taken away, He became Reconciled to God, received again into His Favour, and returned, as it were, to his former State of Happiness. These means of Grace brought back with them, the hopes of Glory which were lost by Sin.

I have not, I see, been able, within the Compass I have taken, to speak to the Words of the Text, with near that Clearness and that Fulness which they very well deserve. I chose them upon THIS OCCASION, because they contain in them,

the short, but very lively Description, as well of the sad Estate and Condition of the *Gentiles*, with respect to the Worship of the true God, the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, their Vassalage to *Satan*, and their Slavery under *Sin*; as also of the Remedies that God in his boundless Goodness hath provided for these Evils, *Faith* in His Son, *Repentance* of their Sins, and *Obedience* to His Laws; together with the inestimable Favours, Privileges, and Mercies that attend the Conversion of them to Christianity, *forgiveness* of Sins, and an *Inheritance* among the Saints, in everlasting Happiness.

For these Reasons it was, that I chose these Words to speak to; and because the Application of them to our present Meeting is so easie and so proper. For if the end of my appearing here be (as I think it is) to excite the *Zeal* of every one that hears me, to contribute all that in them lies to the Advancement of the Kingdom of Christ, the *Propagation* of the Gospel in Foreign Parts: What single Motive can I name, what Argument or Reason can I bring to effect this End, that is not properly reducible to some of these forementioned Heads? The World with which we are concern'd, still sits in *Darkness* and the shadow of *Death*: The People as ignorant, as vicious, and idolatrous as then: The Gospel brings
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as glad Tidings of Peace and Salvation to These, as Those : Their Wants are much the same, so are the Remedies. And if the Mission be not now so Personal and immediate, as St. Paul's in this Case was, from Christ himself; yet I am sure the Mission is so general, and the Command so binding, that I believe it would be hard for any single Christian in the World, to find himself exempted from complying with it, according to the measure and degree of his Abilities and Opportunities. Go, saith our Lord, and make Disciples in all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you: And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World. The Work is to last as long as there is Occasion; and tho' it be put into the Hands of his Apostles, and all that shall succeed them to the World's End, in all the necessary Parts of their Ministration, and such as are peculiar to their Office; yet does the Reason of the Command oblige all other Christians to be as Serviceable, Useful, and Instrumental to the fulfilling it, as they are able. No Christian is exempted from contributing to the best of his Power, to the spreading and enlarging the Kingdom of Christ, the giving Him the Heathen for His Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth
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for His Possession: Not that every *Christian* or every *Church-Man* is hereby oblig'd to leave his Country to convert the Infidels, but that such be sent, to whom such Work is proper, and encouraged and assisted in their Undertakings, with all the Advantages and Powers, that *Governments* are able to afford them; and that all private *Christians* forward and assist them by all the Means and Methods they are masters of, doing whatever in them lies towards a Work of such unspeakable Compassion and true Charity.

Now taking this for granted, that all *Christians*, both by the Nature and Reason of the Thing, as well as *Christ's Command*, stand oblig'd to contribute to the bringing the whole World to the Knowledge and Faith of *Christ*, as they have Opportunity and Abilities of doing it -- Taking this for granted, it will be very hard to find Excuses for those *Christian Governments*, or those private *Christians*, who are not content barely to pass by, and neglect the Opportunities of bringing many thousand Souls to *Christ*, who died to save them all; but who really discourage such as, animated with true and godly Zeal, would undertake that godly Work.

That I may not lose my self in Generals, nor be encumbred with too many Particulars, I will at this time, with your Patience, consider only the

the Case of such, as will not permit their Slaves to be instructed in the Faith of Christ, and brought to Baptism: A thing so common in all our Plantations abroad, that I have reason to doubt, whether there be any Exception of any People of ours, who cause their Slaves to be Baptized. What do these People think of Christ? What of their Slaves? What of themselves? What do they think of Christ? That He who came from Heaven, to purchase to Himself a Church, with his own precious Blood, should sit contented, and behold with unconcern, those who profess themselves his Servants, excluding from its Gates those who would gladly enter if they might, and exercising no less Cruelty to their Souls (as far as they are able) than to their Bodies? One may ask with Indignation indeed, what such People think of Christ? But 'tis more proper to say, they think not at all of Him: For if they would consider Him in any Quality or Capacity whatever, as Saviour, Law-giver, Head of His Church, or Judge, they would no more venture to lay an Impediment in any one's way to Conversion, than they would throw themselves into the Fire deliberately. It would be as hard for them, to give an Account of what they think of those unhappy Creatures, whom they use thus cruelly: They see them equally the Workman-
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ship of God, with themselves; endued with the same Faculties, and intellectual Powers; Bodies of the same Flesh and Blood, and Souls as certainly immortal: These People were made to be as Happy as themselves, and are as capable of being so; and however hard their Condition be in this World, with respect to their Captivity and Subjection, they were to be as Just and Honest, as Chast and Virtuous, as Godly and Religious as themselves: They were bought with the same Price, purchased with the same Blood of Christ, their common Saviour and Redeemer; and in order to all this, they were to have the Means of Salvation put into their Hands, they were to be instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, to have the Terms and Conditions fairly offered and proposed to them. Let any of these cruel Masters tell us, what part of all these Blessings were not intended for their unhappy Slaves by God, purchased for them by the Blood of Christ, and which they are not equally capable of enjoying with themselves? What Account then, will these Masters give of *themselves*, who are the Occasion and the Instruments of bringing these unhappy People, from a Country where the Name of *Christ* is never heard, or call'd upon, into a Country where *Christians* govern all, and *Christ* is call'd their Lord and Master, and yet will not permit these Slaves to be Instruct-

Instructed, and become the Servants of this heavenly Master? Who bring them, as it were, into Sight of the Waters of Life, and then with-hold them from receiving any Benefit from them! They hope, 'tis likely, God will be Merciful to these unhappy Creatures, tho' they themselves will not be so: Their Hope is good; but they have Reason to fear God may deny that Mercy to themselves, which they deny to others: And no Man living can assign a better and more justifiable Cause, for God's with-holding Mercy from a Christian, than that Christian's with-holding the Mercy of Christianity from an Unbeliever. If these Men ever read the Scriptures, and meet with such a Question as this -- *Lord, are there few that be Saved?* What a strange puzzle must they be at to make an Answer? I for my own particular part hinder, as much as possibly I can, some Fifty or an Hundred, it may be many more, from being Saved. I can be certain only of the Salvation of Christians, and therefore am my self a Christian: I know it is impossible for any one to become a Christian, without being instructed in the Knowledge of Christ, and being afterwards baptized with Water, in the manner and form prescribed by Christ himself; and I know I hinder all these People that are under me, from being Instructed and Baptized; go on --- Therefore I know

I hinder them, as much as in me lies, from being Saved. I dare not for all the World renounce to my own Baptism: I would not venture my own Salvation on God's unpromised, unrevealed Mercy, without the being made a *Christian*, as I should; but yet I have nothing to depend upon, but that unpromised Mercy for these poor Creatures; and now, 'tis in my Power to seal that Mercy to them certainly, by Means and Instruments of God's own Appointment, and yet refuse to do it. The Scriptures will read strangely with such Practices as these; and a *Christian* hindring others from becoming *Christians*, must needs be a strange Creature, even to himself, when he considers.

To these and other heavy Objections that tye to this inhumane Practice, there are but two or three poor Pretences that must answer, which I will now consider in a few Words. The *First* is, that were their Slaves *Christians*, they would immediately, upon their Baptism, become *Free*. The *Second* is, that were their Slaves *Christians*, and still to continue Slaves, yet they should be oblig'd to treat them with more Humanity and Mercy, than the nature and necessity of their Service would admit of, to make their Masters Gainers. And the *Third* is much of the same kind, that were their Slaves *Christians*, they could
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not sell them, it being Unlawful, they say, to sell Christians.

To the First of these Pretences, namely -- That should they suffer their Slaves to be Baptized, they would immediately become Free -- We may Answer, that were this true, the Mischief of it would be no greater in our Plantations abroad, than it is at home, where there is no such thing as Slavery, but all our Work is done by hired Servants, for good Wages and good Usage will always invite Servants, even to the hardest Labours: And if this would not turn to a good Account, 'twere better the World should pay much dearer for the Pleasures and Conveniencies those Places afford, than purchase them so cheaply at the expence of so much Misery, such Cruelty and hard Treatment of Men, as good as our selves, and at the hazard of their Souls. But allowing this would be some Inconvenience to the Civil Government, with respect to Trade, is there any Question, whether the Blessing of God upon their Piety and good Designs in furtherance of his Glory, in the Salvation of Mens Souls, would make an ample Compensation for all the Inconveniencies and Loss it might sustain, by making their Slaves, or letting them be made Christians? But after all, what considering Man would run the hazard of being under

God's Displeasure, by hindring others from becoming Christians, for all the Profit, Honour, and Advantage in the World. But Secondly, there is no fear of losing the Service and Profit of their Slaves, by letting them become *Christians*: Their Avarice and Cruelty are grounded on a certain Mistake: They are neither prohibited by the Laws of God, nor those of the Land, from keeping *Christian Slaves*; their Slaves are no more at Liberty after they are Baptized, than they were before. There were People in St. Paul's time, that imagined they were freed from all former Engagements, by becoming *Christians*; but St. Paul tells them, this was not the meaning of *Christian Liberty*; the Liberty wherewith *Christ* had made them Free, was Freedom from their Sins, Freedom from the Fears of Death, and everlasting Misery, and not from any State of Life, in which they had either voluntarily engaged themselves, or were fallen into through their Misfortune. Let every Man (says He, 1 Cor. 7. 20.) abide in the same Calling, wherein he was called. Let every Man know, that his being called to the Faith of *Christ*, does not exempt him from continuing in the same State of Life he was before; it makes no alteration of his Condition in this World; the Liberty of Christianity is entirely Spiritual. Art thou called,

called, being a *Servant*? care not for it; but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather. Art thou Baptized and made a *Christian*, being a *Slave*? mind it not; be not much concerned at it; but if thou canst obtain thy *Liberty*, by fair and honest Means, use it rather, take the Opportunity: If *Liberty* comes legally, or by the favour of thy Patron, accept of it by all Means; thou mayst thereby be better enabled, to serve God, when thou art at thine own Disposal. Brethren, let every one wherein he is called, therein abide with God. In a Word, the Law of Christ made no changes of this Nature, but left Men under all the Obligations and Engagements that it found them, with respect to *Liberty* or *Bondage*: Nor do the Laws of the Land hinder People from being Slaves when they become *Christians*. Christianity has so long prevailed in these Parts of the World, that there are no Advantages or Privileges now peculiar to it, to distinguish it from any other Sect or Party; and therefore whatever Liberties the Laws indulge to us, they do it to us as *English-Men*, and not as *Christians*. If therefore it be lawful in our Country, to have or keep any Slaves at all, it is equally lawful to have or keep them so, tho' they are *Christians*: The Laws do not distinctly favour *Christianity* in this Point: And if they should see fit to do it here

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at home, where there is no Occasion for such Slaves, what need were there yet of doing it abroad, where there is great Occasion for them? And supposing Christianity did (by the favour of Laws, and by the Indulgence of Princes) immediately emancipate and free all Slaves receiving Baptism, yet since it would be so much, either to the Dishonour of God, the Prejudice of Christ's Religion, or to the prejudice of Trade and Civil Government at home; who could despair of obtaining Laws, to reconcile these Interests, in an Age so free and fruitful of Laws as ours is? I would not have any one's Zeal for Religion (much less my own) so far outrun their Judgment in these matters, as to cause them to forget that we are a People who live and maintain our selves by Trade; and that if Trade be lost, or overmuch discouraged, we are a ruined Nation; and shall our selves in time become as very Slaves, as these I am speaking of, tho' in another kind: I would not therefore be understood, in what I have already said, or in what I am to say farther, to plead for any other Liberties or Privileges, than what are reconcileable with Trade, and the Nation's Interest, tho' a little perhaps abated.

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But this, I say, is a Mistake common to Masters and to Servants, and occasions the latter to seek for Baptism purely for the sake of Liberty, without Regard to the true unspeakable Advantages of Christianity; and occasions the former to hinder them, by all Means, from being Baptized, for fear of losing their Service; and with as little regard to the Spiritual Privileges, which they thereby withhold from those unhappy People: Whereas if both were undeceived, the Masters would be no Losers, and the Servants the greatest gainers in the World.

The *Second* Pretence is this, That should their Slaves continue Slaves after their Baptism, yet they should be oblig'd to use them with *less Rigour*, than the nature and necessity of their Service will admit, if their Masters must be Gainers by them. This indeed is somewhat for the Honour of *Christ's Religion*, that it commands the Exercise of all Compassion, Kindness, and good Nature towards *Christians*; but this, I think, is common to most Religions with it, which equally favour their particular Professors; and *Christianity* distinguishes it self from them, by commanding Mercy and Compassion to be shewn to *all the World* alike, without respect to Sect or Party, unless where there is an unavoidable Occasion of Preference. We are command-
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ed to follow His Example, who is rich in Mercy towards all, whether Jew or Gentile, Bond or Free. Should some Necessity compel us to deal hardly with either Jew or Christian; our Love to Christ, and Honour to His Name, would soon determine where the Hardship were to fall; but where there is no occasion for any Preference, the Christian Religion does as strongly and certainly oblige to shew Mercy and Compassion to Jews and Gentiles, as to Christians. The Commands of Christ do certainly bind us to pity all Mankind, to do to all Men, indistinctly, all the good we can, and not to Christians only; for that would be to fall into the Partiality of the Jews, who would only shew Kindness to Jews, which Christ himself reprove, and condemns as a straitness and narrowness of Mind; and falling very short of His extensive Charity: So that to deal more rigorously with an Infidel than with a Christian, is to compliment our Saviour with Disobedience; to do some Honour to His Name, which He would have us pay to His Nature, in shewing Kindness to our Fellow Creatures: It is therefore a great Mistake at the bottom, to think themselves at Liberty; to treat a Savage, and an Infidel, with Inhumanity and Rigour; but as a strangely cruel and most wicked Absurdity that is built on this Mistake: I may not use a Christian Unmer-

Unmercifully, therefore I will not let this *Savage* be a *Christian*, for fear I may not use him afterwards unmercifully. What a Mockery would it be, to pretend that I cannot relieve a Man, because he is not qualified for my Charity, when I know at the same time, that I hinder him from being qualified, lest I should find my self obliged to relieve him? What is this, but to hinder him, as much as in you lies, from being happy for ever, for fear he should be a little more at Ease in this Life? Be true to your Religion, and go through with it; it obliges you to shew all Pity and good Nature, even to the Bodies of your Slaves; and then when that is settled and believed, you will find your selves disposed to shew all Mercy to their Souls; since the best Reason you can find for being cruel to their Souls, is fetch'd from the Fears of being afterwards disabled from being cruel to their Bodies. Were one talking to good *Christians* on this Subject, we should only need to say to them -- Here is an Opportunity of being merciful both to the Souls and Bodies of your fellow Creatures, for whom *Christ* died, as well as you; and both whose Soul and Blood He will require at your Hands at the last Day, as far as you were instrumental in Tormenting the one, without

Occasion and most just Necessity; and in hindring the other from coming to the Knowledge and Faith in Christ, that was to save it.

The *Third* and last Pretence, is built upon the same Bottom, i. e. that of Interest: For, since they bought their Slaves for Money, they should be Losers by permitting them to be made Christians, since after that, they could not part with them for Money; it being, they say, Unlawful to sell Christians.

Away with all these Honours, that are so hurtful to our Lord; I dare engage He parts most freely with them: He well remembers, how he who betrayed Him, gave Him first a Kiss; and could never since endure, that a seeming Respect should do Him Mischief; and debar Him of a real Advantage. A Christian must not, it seems, be Sold; but then he shall not be a Christian, because he may not afterwards be Sold. This is too like to -- *Hail King of the Jews*, and Buffetting Him, bowing the Knee before Him, and then Spitting at Him. If Christ might be the Advocate for these poor People, He would consent, He would intreat they might be Sold, condemn'd to Bonds, to Stripes, Imprisonment, and Death, rather than live the Slaves of Sin, and Un-
be-

believers, the freest and most arbitrary Princes of their Country. He was Himself both Sold and Bound, and loves a virtuous and religious Slave, rather the better for his Chains or Clogg. Let but the Soul be free from Sin, and the Hands clean from all Unrighteousness, and He regards not how the Body is encumbered with its Weights, nor how those Hands are worn with Bonds and Labours.

But after all, 'tis far from certain, that the Laws forbid a *Christian* to be Sold: If Men had truly a Propriety in their Slaves before they were Baptized, and could dispose of them as they do of other Goods and Cattel for Money, or its worth, I dare be positive the *Laws of Christ* will not deprive them of this Property; and I am very sure the *Laws of the Kingdom* take not away the Right of such a Sale, upon receiving Baptism, if it were justifiable before.

But did the Laws indeed pretend, in such a sort, to honour *Christ's Religion*, it could be no hard matter to convince our Lawgivers, how prejudicial all such Favours were to *Christianity*; and to desire them no longer to honour *Christians* already, with such Privileges as put a Stop to the Propagation, and farther growth of *Christianity*; but let

the Christians (as was said above) be Sold, and Bound, and Scourged, condemn'd to Bonds and Imprisonment, to endure all Hardships and Disgrace, and to enter into Heaven, Blind, and Halt, and Maimed, rather than having two Eyes, and Hands and Feet entire, to perish Miserably. That is the Sum of all I have been saying, (and which may shame one to recount) that were these Reasons and Pretences, for with-holding Baptism from our Slaves in our Plantations abroad, justifiable and true, they ought to be removed: And all that can consider seriously these Things, will certainly consent, nay, and be glad, that Slaves, tho' *Christians*, might be Bought and Sold, and used like Slaves, rather than still be Bought and Sold, and used like Slaves, and not permitted to be *Christians*. And one may wonder how a *Christian Government* can look upon it self as unconcern'd in this Affair; and only consider these unhappy Wretches, as Creatures that save the Kingdom the Charge of transporting Horses, and Beasts of Carriage, for the *Islands* Service, without reflecting on their Shape and Form, and intellectual Powers, and without looking up to *Christ* their common Master, the Saviour and Redeemer of us all.

This.

This unconcernedness of the Publick it is, most probably, that encourages a great many private People at home amongst our selves, to keep these *Africans*, or *Indians*, in their native Ignorance and Blindness, and to continue them *Infidels* in the midst of a *Christian Kingdom*. These People ought to think what answer they will make to *Christ*, when He shall ask them, why they would not help to increase His Kingdom, and to make their fellow Creatures as Happy, as they hoped themselves to be, by being called by *His Name*? Such Questions will be asked them, with Severity enough, and will require a better Answer than, I fear, the subtilest Christian in the World can make: And therefore, sure, it were better to prevent them by removing the Occasion.

Thus I have done with the *single Case*, that I proposed to consider at this Time. The Excellent Labours of my *Honoured Brethren*, who have gone before me, in this Exercise, have truly made it almost necessary for me, to confine my self to some such single Subject: They have, with so much Learning, Piety and Prudence, and so discreet a Zeal, handled all the general Heads, that whether

I should have tried to shew the Excellency and Usefulness of such an Institution and Society, as ours is: The general Obligations all Christians, and in particuler, all in holy Orders, lye under, to promote this Charitable Work of bringing Souls to Christ; or whether I should have ventured to prescribe and lay down Rules for the conducting our selves and others in this Affair; or have proposed some proper Means, for the better carrying on this great Design; or should have spent my Time in returning Thanks and Praise to God, for the Grace He hath given to those who, all along, have shewn an Exemplary truly Christian Fervency, in promoting, and contributing to this good Work; or in Encouraging, Exhorting, and Persuading others to the like: Whatever of this kind I should have undertaken, my best Endeavours had, I find, been happily superseded.

But that which chiefly inclined me to speak to this particular Case, at this Time, was - That it is really, now, *our own Case*; a thing, in which we are all of us here, that belong to this Society, so personally concerned, that it behoves us, every one of us, to think of it. We are now, by the Munificence of a truly Honourable Gentleman, our selves become the Patrons of at least Three Hundred Slaves, who
are

are to Cultivate, and be Maintain'd upon the two Plantations he hath left to this Society, for the promoting Learning and Religion.

The Name of this our Noble Benefactor will certainly be held, by this Religious Corporation, in everlasting Honour and Remembrance. And tho' the constant good Effects of this his Bounty, will speak his Praises to Posterity; yet some good Mand, I hope, will sooner pay due Honours to his Memory, and recommend his great Example to such as shall be found able, in some Degree, to follow it. For, give me leave to assure you, (you that know it not) that after all that has been done, the Issues, and the necessary Charges of the Society, do double, very near, the certain and the settled Yearly Income of it, and that too, but just as certain and as settled as the Life of Man: And therefore it requires that others also, like this our good Araunah, should give as a King. I see, and cannot but adore, the gracious Hand of God, in thus supplying our Necessities, by casual unexpected Charitable Benefactions. Nor have we any Reason to distrust the Continuance of His Goodness, whilst we sincerely seek His Glory, and the Good of Mankind. But He Himself, who, for a Season, did the Re-

vens feed the Prophet, and then commanded
 a *Widow Woman* to sustain him, (her self the
 while sustain'd by Miracle) *1 Kings 17. 4,*
&c. yet, after, left him to subsist, as others
 did, by common Providence, and usual hu-
 mane Methods. — But I forget my self. — The
 thing I was to say, was this, or something like
 it; That if all the Slaves throughout *America*,
 and every *Island* in those Seas, were to con-
 tinue Infidels for ever, yet ours alone must needs
 be Christians: We must instruct them in the
 Faith of Christ, bring them to Baptism, and
 put them in the way that leads to everlast-
 ing Life. This will be preaching by Example;
 the most effectual way of recommending
 Doctrines, to a hard and unbelieving World,
 blinded by Interest, and other Prepossessions.
 And this, it may be, will weigh more,
 and operate better, with those who are con-
 cerned, than the Example both of *French* and
Spaniards will, who all along have brought
 their Slaves to Baptism. Who could endure
 so absurd and wounding a Reproach object-
 ed with Cause, as this — That those poor Men,
 the Profit of whose never-ceasing Labours is
 bestowed by a *Christian Gentleman*, on a Soci-
 ety erected and established by a *Christian King*,
 (of

(of ever glorious Memory) to propagate the Christian Faith, should not themselves be suffered to be Christians? How would that merciful Command of God, in Deut. 25. 4. rise up in Judgment and condemn us all -- Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn, i. e. Thou shalt not starve the Creature, whilst he is preparing Bread to feed his Master. That Text, I undertake to say, shall never be applied to this Society, with any manner of Reproach. The Servants of this Society shall be, assuredly, the Lord's Free-Men, whatever else their Condition shall be in this World; and yet, I hope, even that will be changed a good deal for the better: They must be Christians, and they will be treated too as such, i. e. with all the Mercy and good Nature that can well be shewn, consistently with their continuing Useful and Laborious Servants, which certainly are things that may be tolerably reconciled. And yet, with all the warmest Wishes and Desires that a zealous Heart can have, to see this matter take Effect, it will be very difficult for a considering Man, not to conclude, it must, and ought to be, a Work of Time, and the maturest Counsels: It will require, and will employ

the ablest Heads we have, and Men of the most comprehensive Views amongst this great Society, to find out such a Blessed Medium. And to their best Deliberation, Circumspection, utmost Caution and Discretion, but most especially to God's Blessing, it is that we must leave it; to whom be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Glory, Praise and Dominion, now and for ever.

F I N I S.

A short **ABSTRACT** *of the most*
Material Proceedings and Occurrences in the
SOCIETY, *for the Propagation of the Go-*
spel in Foreign Parts; Between February 17th
and Ditto 17th.

THE Society having, *pro re nata*, made a great many useful Orders and By-Laws, from Time to Time since their Incorporation, touching the Government of themselves, their Officers, and Missionaries; and being of Opinion, that it might be for the Honour and Service of their Body, to publish the said Orders, they refer'd them to the *Standing Committee* that meets at *St. Paul's Chapter-House*, to revise the same, and to digest them under proper Heads, and then to print them in such manner, and such a number of Copies, as they should think expedient.

THE Society, after long and frequent Deliberations upon the most proper Methods of Increasing their Fund, and bringing it to bear a nearer Proportion to their constant and certain Expences; of which, at present, it falls very short, have at last resolv'd upon, and actually made an Humble Application to the QUEEN, that Her Majesty would be pleas'd to encourage a public Collection through all the Parishes and Precincts, within the Bills of Mortality, for the promoting the pious Designs of the Society; and to render it more effectual, they have desired that the Ministers of London, Westminster, and Southwark, might be directed by their respective Diocesans, the Bishops of London and Winchester, to recommend the Matter from the Pulpit on Good-Friday next; which manner

of Proceeding was suggested to them by a Right Reverend Prelate, in his Sermon at *Bow-Church*, about Two Years since, preach'd at the Anniversary Meeting of the said Society; and by another Right Reverend Prelate it was advis'd, that an Essay, or Beginning, should be first made in this Great and Rich City this Year, not doubting but *Bristol, Norwich, Exeter*, and other Towns which trade to *Foreign Parts*, would follow the good Example.

III. It having been frequently represented to the Society, that there is a very great want of a Bishop to Govern those Missionaries, whom the Society has, or shall from time to time, send over to *New-England, New-York, Pennsylvania*, and other Parts of the Continent of *North-America*, as well as the rest of the Clergy in those and the adjacent Colonies; and to ordain others, and to confirm the Children of the Clergy and Laity; this Matter has been most seriously considered of, and is yet depending before the Society; and in the mean time, and till they can bring it to bear, they are looking out for the best and most commodious Place, as near the Center as possible of the abovementioned Colonies, to fix the See for the said Bishop; and having been Inform'd, that at *Burlington* in *New-Jersey*, there is a spacious and very convenient House, with some Land belonging to it, (fit for the purpose) to be disposed of upon good Terms, they have empower'd the Honourable Colonel *Hunter*, Her Majesty's Governour of *New-York* and the *Jerseys*, to treat with the Owner for the Purchase thereof.

IV. Besides the Missionaries (with whom the Society has liberally provided several of Her Majesty's Colonies, even beyond the narrow Bounds of their Income) there has been a great Demand upon them
for

for Catechists and School-Masters, to Instruct not only the Servants and Slaves, (who have hitherto lived as without God in the World), but also the Children of the Planters, especially the poorer sort, in Reading, Writing, and the Principles of the Christian Religion, as Taught and Professed in the Church of England; but the narrowness of their Fund having obliged the Society to send but few of these, a worthy Member of their Body, Colonel *Heartschte* of *New-York*, has suggested an Expedient of maintaining a great many more School-Masters, at the easy rate of Five or Six Pounds *per Annum*, which the Society has most readily Embraced, and refer'd it to the Governour himself, and the Missionaries of that Province, to put the Proposal into Practice.

V. The Society having thought fit to admit into their Body several eminent Divines, and other Persons of *Holland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland* and other Countries, being of the Protestant Religion; it has been resolved, for the Dignity of the Society, and to shew them the greater Respect, that the Notice of their Admission should be sent them under the general Seal of the said Society.

VI. Besides the great Charge of sending Missionaries to our Plantations; it has been no small Article in the Disbursements of the Society, to allow Bibles, Common Prayer-Books, Catechisms, and other Practical and Devotional Tracts, where wanted; and accordingly the Society has sent considerable Numbers of *English* and *French* Common-Prayer Books to *Carolina, New-York*, &c. this and the last Year; and it having been represented to them, that abundance of the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and other Towns in the Province of that Name, being *Dutch* Men, were very well dispos'd to embrace the Church of *England* Doctrine

and

and Worship; the Society has thought fit, at their own Charge, to Print Seven Hundred and Fifty Copies of the Liturgy in *English* and *Low-Dutch*, for the same Purpose; and since the Establishment of the Poor Palatines in the said Country, they don't only maintain a Minister among them, but intend, as soon as their Fund is enlarged, to give them also a whole Impression of our Liturgy in the *High Dutch*, or *German* Tongue, which, as they are inform'd from thence, is like to be a happy Expedient of uniting both Lutherans and Calvinists, and bringing them all over to the Church of England.

VII. This Year has been remarkable also for the Arrival of the Four *Indian* Sachems or Kings, as they are commonly stiled, who came from, and on the behalf of the Six Nations which border upon the Province of *New-York*, to enter into a more strict Alliance with the Crown of England, against the common Enemy, the *French* of *Canada*, and to desire that Missionaries may be sent among them to instruct their People in the Christian Religion, whereupon Her Majesty was Graciously pleas'd to refer them to the Society, for the latter part of their Proposals, who accordingly treated with them several times, and at last agreed to allow 300*l.* per Annum for maintaining two Missionaries among them, on condition that the Government do Build them a Chappel and House, and Fortify the same, for the security of the said Missionaries, and maintain an Interpreter till they can make themselves Masters of the Language: All which the Queen has most Graciously consented to. There is a Person likewise in *South-Carolina*, who offers to bring up his Son to the Ministry, and to send him among the *Yamousee Indians*, to perfect himself in their Language, and to teach them ours, in order hereafter to instruct

struct them in the Knowledge of the Christian Religion, whom the Society have agreed to supply with Books, and to give him all fitting Incouragement.

VIII. Nor have the Society's Missionaries and Catechists been wanting in their Zeal for bringing the *Indians* and *Negroes* to the Light of the Gospel; and God has been pleased to give such a Blessing to their Endeavours, that the Society has received in this, as well as former Years, very comfortable Accounts of the great Progress that has been made in that Pious Design, particularly in *South Carolina*, by Dr. *le Jan*, Mr. *Maule*, and others, who have Instructed and Baptized several Men, Women, and Children, both *Indians* and *Negroes*; and in *New-York* there has been such a noble Harvest, through the indefatigable Pains of that worthy Confessor Mr. *Elias Nenny*, that the Government of that Country have thought it worth Incouraging by a Publick Act of their Assembly for Converting the *Indian* and *Negro* Slaves and Servants.

IX. About the same time, the Society receiv'd the News of General *Codrington's* Death, together with a Copy of his last Will and Testament, made in *February 1705*, not very long after their Establishment, (tho' never revealed to any body till after the Decease of the said General) by which Will, besides several other noble and excellent Charities, he gives and bequeaths his two Plantations in the Island of *Barbadoes*, and part of his Island of *Barbuda*, to the Society for the Propagation of the Christian Religion in Foreign Parts, Erected and Established by his late good Master King *William the Third*; and desires that the Plantations should continue entire, and Three Hundred *Negroes* at least always kept thereon; and a convenient Number of Professors and Scholars maintained there, who are to be oblig'd to Study and Practise *Physick* and *Chirurgery*, as well as *Divinity*, that by the apparent Use

Usefulness of the former to all Mankind, they may both endeavor themselves to the People, and have the better opportunities of doing good to Mens Souls, whilst they are taking care of their Bodies. But the Particulars of the Constitution belongs to the Society, composed of wise and good Men. These Plantations have been computed to amount to upwards of 2000l. per Annum, clear of all Charges.

X. Besides this Noble and Generous Bequest, which is appropriated by General Codrington to the Island of Barbadoes, and which, at best, can only serve as a Seminary of Missionaries to be dispersed throughout the Plantations, The Society has recover'd another Legacy of 1000l. Sterling, given to them by the late Pious and Charitable Nicholas Pitt Esq; which, when receiv'd, will help to bring the Accounts of their Income and Disbursements to a greater Equality with each other; not to mention another Legacy of 200l. given them by Ralph Snow Esq; Steward and Auditor, for many Years, to four Arch-Bishops of Canterbury successively; which said 200l. is appropriated to buy Land, or other Yearly Rents, and to be applied towards the Support of a Missionary, chosen out of the Province of Canterbury; besides other smaller Benefactions: As for Instance, one of 20l. sent up by the Reverend Mr. King of Exeter, and particularly appropriated to the Indian Mission, &c.

XI. The Fund or Revenue of the Society, consisting wholly of the aforementioned casual Benefactions and Subscriptions, or Annual Payments of their own Members, whose Contributions are voluntary, and who may withdraw themselves from that Body, and the Support of it, when they please: The Society, to increase their Income in proportion to their Expences (besides the Methods abovementioned for procuring Benefactions by a publick Collection from our Wealthy and

and Charitable Citizens) are oblig'd to enlarge the Number of their Members, and accordingly they have this last Year added the following Persons: The Lord Bishop of *St. Davids*; the Reverend A. D. *Tenison*, A. D. *Warley*; Dr. *Samuel Clarke*, Rector of *St. James's*; Dr. *John Waugh*, Rector of *St. Peter's Cornhil*; Mr. *Sherlock*, Master of the Temple; Mr. *Rival*, one of the Ministers of the Royal French Chapel at *St. James's*; the Reverend *Messieurs Ancillon* and *L'Enfant*, Chaplains to the King of *Prussia*; the Honourable Colonel *Lomther*, Governour and Captain General of *Barbadoes*; Sir *Nathaniel Lloyd*, Her Majesty's Advocate General and Vice-Chancellor of the University of *Cambridge*; Sir *Clement Cottetel*, Master of the Ceremonies; *Francis Wilkinson Esq*; *Daniel Dolins Esq*; Mr. *Nathaniel Carpenter*, Merchant of *London*; Mr. *Matthew Christoffers*, Merchant of *Amsterdam*; and Mr. *Isaac Behaghel*, Merchant of *Frankfort on the Main*.

XII. As the Society has augmented the Number of their Members, they have likewise more than balanced the same, by the increase of their Missionaries, Catechists, and School-Masters; for upon a Representation to them from Mr. *Vaughan*, Minister of *Elizabeth-Town*, and several other Parishes in *New-Jersey*, that he could not possibly supply so many Places in that Province, to which he was appointed; the Society were so kind as to divide the Burden between the said Mr. *Vaughan* and Mr. *Thomas Halliday*, whom they lately sent over to that Country: *Dover Hundred* and *Chester* (both situate upon *Delaware River*, between *West-Jersey* and *Pennsylvania*) being vacant, they sent over to the first Mr. *Jacob Henderson*, and to the latter Mr. *George Ross*. Mr. *Mackenzey*, the Society's Missionary in *Staten Island* in the Province of *New-York*, having inform'd them how much they wanted School-

Masters, to instruct the Children of the *English, Dutch* and *French*, in the said Island, and having recommended Mr. *Adam Brown*, and Mr. *Benjamin Drenth*, for that Purpose, the Society made choice of them both; and in the City of *New-York*, they have given a little Pension to Mr. *William Huddleston*, the chief School-Master there, upon condition that he shall Teach 40 poor Children *gratis*, after the same manner as they are instructed in our Charity Schools here in *England*; Lastly, they have sent over to *St. James's Parish* near *Goose-Creek* in *South-Carolina*, one Mr. *Benjamin Dennis*, as a School-master for that Place, at the Recommendation of their worthy Missionary, the Reverend Dr. *Francis le Fau*; and have fixed a Missionary, with a standing Salary, in *St. Andrew's Parish*, on *Ashley River*, in the said Province, the Reverend Mr. *Wood*.

XIII. Lastly, The Auditors of the Society's Accounts having laid before them an Estimate of their Income and Disbursements for the Year 1716; The Gross Items appear thus.

Society Debtor.	Society Creditor.
To certain Disbursements, Salaries to Missionaries, School-masters, &c.	By Annual Subscriptions.
1408 00 00	0716 00 00
To casual Disbursements for Books, &c.	By Casual Benefactions, exclusive of the 1000l. because not receiv'd.
0327 00 00	0547 00 00
To Arrears of Salaries, &c. to Christians last.	1263 00 00
0565 00 00	Due to Ballance 1097 00 00
3300 00 00	

F I N I S.

